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RWANDA: Thousands Protest French, Belgian Roles in 'Genocide'

EA1404195095 Kigali Radio Rwanda in English 1915 GMT 13 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] As the week of national mourning entered its seventh day, Rwandese nationals today participated in a peaceful march to demonstrate against the role of France, Belgium, and Radio RTLM [Radio-Television des Milles Collines] in last year's genocide that claimed more than 1 million lives. The demonstration was headed by a human rights association. It began at 1430 at the French Cultural Center and proceeded to the French Embassy. The march proceeded to the former building that housed Radio RTLM and went on to the Belgian Embassy and ended at Hotel Diplomate.

France supplied arms and training personnel to the [word indistinct] Interahamwe [pro-Republican National Movement for Democracy and Development militia] that carried out last year's massacres on Tutsis and moderate Hutus. Radio RTLM played an important role inflaming ethnic hatred and called upon the Hutu population to massacre Tutsis and any Hutu that did not comply with the government policy of extermination. Belgians, who were at one time colonial masters, have also been blamed in preparing the ground for genocide by widening the gap between Hutus and Tutsis.

Some placards read: "Justice delayed is justice denied," "We demand immediate arrest and trial of RTLM proprietors and journalists wherever they are," "Mitterrand the murderer."

During the march, the demonstrators stopped at the French ambassador's residence where the demonstrators read a message denouncing the support by the French Government toward Habyarimana's regime in planning and implementing the genocide. It said that France should express an official apology to the Rwandese people. As the demonstrators arrived at the former Radio RTLM station, they stopped to reflect on the role that the radio played in the preparation of the genocide by [word indistinct] ethnic hatred among Rwandese.

The minister of information, Jean-Baptiste Nkuliyingoma, used the opportunity to condemn the destructive role of Radio RTLM and cautioned the press against any information aimed at dividing the Rwandese people. The demonstrators concluded their march at Hotel Diplomate which the self-proclaimed government of Mr. Jean Kambanda had used as a headquarters. [passage omitted]

[Kigali Radio Rwanda in French at 1800 GMT on 13 April in a similar report adds: "About 15,000 people took part in the march."]

The week of national mourning to commemorate genocide victims will end on Saturday, 14 April.]